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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Interdisciplinary Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Interdisciplinary Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.325K.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at

www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Maryann McDermott, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5144, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5108. Telephone: (202) 245-7439.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to

(1) help address State-identified needs for personnel preparation in special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education to work with

children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 662 and 681 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Interdisciplinary Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

Background:

The mission of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is to improve early childhood, educational, and employment outcomes and raise

expectations for all people with disabilities, their families, their communities, and the Nation.

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number and improve the quality of personnel who are fully credentialed to serve children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities who have high-intensity needs,¹ especially in areas of chronic personnel shortage. The priority will fund high-quality interdisciplinary² projects that prepare special education,

¹ For the purposes of this priority, "high-intensity needs" refers to a complex array of disabilities (e.g., multiple disabilities, significant cognitive disabilities, significant physical disabilities, significant sensory disabilities, significant autism, significant emotional disabilities, or significant learning disabilities, including dyslexia) or the needs of children with these disabilities requiring intensive, individualized intervention(s) (i.e., that are specifically designed to address persistent learning or behavior difficulties, implemented with greater frequency and for an extended duration than is commonly available in a typical classroom or early intervention setting, or which require personnel to have knowledge and skills in identifying and implementing multiple evidence-based interventions).

² For the purposes of this priority, "interdisciplinary" refers to preparing scholars from two or more graduate degree programs in either (a) special education or early intervention and one or more related services through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated field experiences; or (b) two or more related services through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated field experiences. Different graduate degree programs across more than one institution of higher education may partner to develop an interdisciplinary project.

For the purpose of this priority, "interdisciplinary" does not include: (a) individual scholars who receive two or more graduate degrees; (b) one graduate degree program that prepares scholars with different areas of focus; (c) one graduate degree program that offers interdisciplinary content but does not prepare scholars from two or more degree programs together; and (d) one graduate degree program in special education, early intervention, and related services partnering with a graduate degree program other than special education, early intervention, or related services. Programs in which scholars receive only a certificate or endorsement without a graduate degree are not eligible.

early intervention, and related services³ personnel at the master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in a variety of educational settings, including natural environments (including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate), early learning programs, classrooms, and school settings. This priority is consistent with the Secretary's Supplemental Priority 5--Meeting the Unique Needs of Students and Children With Disabilities and/or Those With Unique Gifts and Talents; and Supplemental Priority 8--Promoting Effective Instruction in Classrooms and Schools, which were published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096).

State demand for fully credentialed special education, early intervention, and related services personnel to serve children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities exceeds the available supply, particularly in high-need schools⁴ (Boe, deBettencourt, Dewey, Rosenberg,

³ For the purposes of this priority, "related services" includes the following: speech-language pathology and audiology services; interpreting services; psychological services; applied behavior analysis; physical therapy and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; social work services; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling; and orientation and mobility services.

⁴ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need school" refers to a public elementary or secondary school that is a "high-need local

Sindelar, & Leko, 2013). These shortages can negatively affect the quality of services provided to children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities and their families (Boe et al., 2013). These shortages limit the field's capacity in ensuring that children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities have the opportunity to meet challenging objectives and receive an individualized education program that is both meaningful and appropriately ambitious, which is essential for preparing them for the future.

The need for personnel with the knowledge and skills to serve children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities who have high-intensity needs is even greater because specialized or advanced preparation is required to collaboratively design and deliver evidence-based instruction and intensive individualized intervention(s) in natural environments, classrooms, and schools that address the needs of these individuals (Boe et al., 2013; Browder, Wood, Thompson, & Ribuffo, 2014; McLeskey & Brownell, 2015). Although children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities who have high-intensity needs may require the combined expertise of

educational agency (LEA)," "high-poverty," or "implementing targeted support and improvement plans" as defined in footnotes 8, 9, and 11, respectively.

numerous professionals (including special education, early intervention, and related services providers), it is often difficult for personnel from varied professional backgrounds to work together because they lack shared information, understanding, and experience.

Interdisciplinary approaches to personnel preparation provide scholars with experience working and learning in team environments similar to those in which they are likely to work once employed (Smith, 2010). For example, under the IDEA, personnel serving children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities will work on interdisciplinary teams with parent(s), general and special education teachers, early interventionists, and related service providers with the expertise convened to design, implement, and evaluate intervention plans based on the unique learning and developmental needs of each individual child. To enable personnel to provide efficient, high-quality integrated services, personnel preparation programs need to embed content, practices, and clinical experience into preservice training that will match the interdisciplinary team-based approaches in which graduates are likely to work. This priority aims to fund interdisciplinary projects that will provide such preparation.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number and improve the quality of personnel who are fully credentialed to serve children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities who have high-intensity needs--especially in areas of chronic personnel shortage. The priority will fund high-quality interdisciplinary projects that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services personnel at the master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in natural environments, early learning programs, classrooms, and school settings serving children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities.

Specifically, an applicant must propose an interdisciplinary project supporting scholars⁵ from two or

⁵ For the purposes of this priority, "scholar" is limited to an individual who (a) is pursuing a master's, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral graduate degree in special education, early intervention, or related services (as defined in this notice); (b) receives scholarship assistance as authorized under section 662 of IDEA (34 CFR 304.3(g)); (c) will be eligible for a license, endorsement, or certification from a State or national credentialing authority following completion of the graduate degree program identified in the application; and (d) will be able to be employed in a position that serves children with disabilities for either 51 percent of their time or case load. See <https://pdp.ed.gov/OSEP/Home/Regulation> for more information.

Scholars from each graduate degree program participating in the proposed interdisciplinary project must receive scholar support and be eligible to fulfill service obligation requirements following graduate degree program completion. Scholars from each graduate degree program

more graduate degree programs in either (a) special education or early intervention and one or more related services; or (b) two or more related services.

An interdisciplinary project is a project that delivers core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences as part of two or more master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree programs for scholars.

Not all requirements (e.g., courses and clinical experiences) of each participating graduate degree program must be shared across all degree programs participating in the interdisciplinary project, but the interdisciplinary project must: (a) identify the competencies needed to address the individualized needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs using an interdisciplinary approach to service delivery; (b) outline how the project will build capacity in those areas through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences for scholars supported by the proposed project; and (c) identify the aspects of each graduate

participating in this project must complete the requirements of their unique graduate degree program and receive different graduate degrees. Individuals pursuing degrees in general education or early childhood education do not qualify as "scholars" eligible for scholarship assistance.

degree program that are shared across all participating programs and those that remain unique to each.

Projects may include individuals who are in degree programs (e.g., general education, early childhood education, administration) and who are cooperating with, but not funded as scholars by, the applicant's proposed interdisciplinary project. These individuals may participate in interdisciplinary coursework, group assignments, coordinated field experiences, and other opportunities funded by the project (e.g., speaker series, monthly seminars) if doing so does not diminish the benefit for project-funded scholars (e.g., by reducing funds available for scholar support or limiting opportunities for scholars to participate in project activities).

Personnel preparation programs that prepare individuals to be educational interpreters for the deaf at the bachelor's degree level can qualify under this priority, and are exempted from (a) the interdisciplinary requirement; and (b) the requirement for two or more graduate degree programs. All other priority requirements specified for graduate programs will apply to the bachelor's program. While interdisciplinary projects are not required for educational interpreters, they are encouraged.

Focus Areas:

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support interdisciplinary projects under the following two focus areas: (A) Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs; and (B) Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

Applicants must identify the specific focus area (i.e., A or B) under which they are applying as part of the competition title on the application cover sheet (SF form 424, line 4). Applicants may not submit the same proposal under more than one focus area.

Focus Area A: Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs. This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences for scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in either: (a) early intervention or early childhood special education and related services for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; or (b) two or more related services to serve infants,

toddlers, and preschool-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Early intervention personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three, and early childhood personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to children with disabilities ages three through five (and in States where the age range is other than ages three through five, we defer to the State's certification for early childhood special education). In States where certification in early intervention is combined with certification in early childhood special education, applicants may propose a combined early intervention and early childhood special education personnel preparation project under this focus area.

Note: In Focus Area A, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) intends to fund 10 awards. OSEP may fund out of rank order high-quality applications from institutions of higher education (IHEs) that primarily serve traditionally underrepresented groups (Minority-Serving IHEs⁶ and Historically Black Colleges and

⁶ For the purposes of this priority, "Minority-Serving IHEs" refers to IHEs with a minority enrollment of 50 percent or more, which may include Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges, and Predominantly Hispanic-Serving Colleges and Universities.

Universities (HBCUs)). These applications must be of high quality and should score higher than 84 on a 100-point scale in the technical review. In order to be considered under this provision, the primary applicant must be a Minority-Serving IHE or HBCU, even in cases of a proposed partnership across entities.

Focus Area B: Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences to scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in either: (a) special education and related services for school-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; or (b) two or more related services to serve school-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Note: In Focus Area B, OSEP may fund out of rank order high-quality applications from IHEs that primarily serve traditionally underrepresented groups (Minority-Serving IHEs and HBCUs). These applications must be of high quality and should score higher than 84 on a 100-point scale in the technical review. In order to be considered under this provision, the primary applicant must be a Minority-Serving

IHE or HBCU, even in cases of a proposed partnership across entities.

Projects funded under Focus Area A or B may use up to 12 months during the first year of the project period and up to \$100,000 of Federal funds for program planning without enrolling scholars. Applicants must provide sufficient justification for requesting program planning time and include the intended outcomes of program planning in Year 1, and a description of the proposed strategies and activities to be supported, such as--

(1) Outlining or updating coursework, group assignments, or coordinated clinical experience needed to support interdisciplinary preparation for special education, early intervention, or related services personnel serving children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(2) Building capacity (e.g., hiring of a clinical practice supervisor, providing professional development for clinical field supervisors, and training for faculty);

(3) Purchasing needed resources (e.g., additional teaching supplies or specialized equipment to enhance instruction); or

(4) Negotiating agreements with programs or schools to serve as sites for coordinated clinical experience

needed to support delivery of the proposed interdisciplinary project.

Remaining Year 1 Federal funds up to the maximum award available for one budget period of 12 months (i.e., \$250,000) may be used for scholar support and other grant activities if included in the Year 1 budget request.

Note: Applicants proposing projects to develop, expand, or add a new area of emphasis to special education, early intervention, or related services programs must provide, in their applications, information on how these new areas will be sustained once Federal funding ends.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, all program applicants must meet the application requirements contained in the priority. All projects funded under this absolute priority also must meet the programmatic and administrative requirements specified in the priority.

The requirements of this priority are as follows:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance of the Project," how--

(1) The project addresses national, State, regional, or district shortages of personnel who are fully qualified to serve children with disabilities, ages birth through 21,

who have high-intensity needs. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Present data on the quality of each special education, early intervention, or related services personnel preparation degree program participating in the project in areas such as: the average amount of time it takes for scholars to complete the program; the percentage of program graduates who receive a license, endorsement, or certification related to special education, related services, or early intervention services; the percentage of program graduates finding employment related to their preparation after graduation; the success of program graduates in providing special education, early intervention, or related services, which could include data on the learning and developmental outcomes of children with disabilities they serve; the percentage of program graduates who maintain employment for two or more years in the area for which they were prepared; and the percentage of employers who rate the preparation of scholars who complete their degree program as adequate or higher; and

(ii) If available for the degree programs participating in the proposed project, present data on the quality of their interdisciplinary approaches to the

preparation of special education, early intervention, or related services personnel.

Note: Data on the quality of a personnel preparation program should be no older than five years prior to the start date of the project proposed in the application. When reporting percentages, the denominator (i.e., total number of scholars or program graduates) must be provided.

(2) The project will increase the number of personnel who demonstrate the competencies needed to provide (a) differentiated instruction, and (b) intensive individualized intervention(s) in an interdisciplinary team-based approach to address the individualized needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs, ages birth through 21, that result in improvements in learning or developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), or successful transition to postsecondary education and the workforce. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Identify the competencies⁷ that special education, early intervention, or related services personnel need in

⁷ For the purposes of this priority, "competencies" means what a person knows and can do--the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively function in a role (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, 2011). These competencies should ensure that personnel are able to use challenging academic standards, child achievement and functional standards, and assessments to improve

order to ensure delivery of (a) differentiated instruction, and (b) intense individualized intervention(s) in an interdisciplinary team-based approach that will: lead to improved learning and developmental outcomes; ensure access to and progress in academic achievement standards or alternate academic achievement standards, as appropriate; lead to successful transition to college and career for children with disabilities, including children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; and maximize the use of effective technology, including assistive technology, to deliver instruction, interventions, and services;

(ii) Identify the competencies needed by members of interdisciplinary teams that will result in improved outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(iii) Identify the competencies that personnel need to support inclusion of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs in the least restrictive and natural environments to the maximum extent appropriate by intentionally promoting participation in learning and social activities to foster development, learning, academic

instructional practices, services, learning and developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), and college- and career-readiness of children with disabilities.

achievement, friendships with peers, and sense of belonging;

(iv) Identify how scholars will be prepared to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based instruction and evidence-based interventions that improve outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs in a variety of settings (e.g., natural environments; public schools, including charter schools; private schools, including parochial schools; and other nonpublic education settings, including home education); and

(v) Provide a conceptual framework for the proposed interdisciplinary personnel preparation project, including any empirical support for project activities designed to promote the acquisition of the identified competencies (see paragraph (a)(2)(i) of the requirements for this priority) needed by special education, early intervention, or related services personnel, and how these competencies relate to the proposed project.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of Project Services," how the project--

(1) Will conduct its planning activities, if up to the first 12 months of the project period will be used for planning.

(2) Will recruit and retain high-quality scholars into each of the graduate degree programs participating in the project and ensure equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Criteria the applicant will use to identify high-quality applicants for admission into each of the graduate degree programs participating in the project;

(ii) Recruitment strategies the applicant will use to attract high-quality applicants and any specific recruitment strategies targeting high-quality applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups, including individuals with disabilities; and

(iii) The approach, including mentoring, monitoring, and accommodations, the applicant will use to support scholars to complete their respective degree programs.

(3) Reflects current evidence-based practices, including practices in the areas of literacy and numeracy development, assessment, behavior, instructional practices, and inclusive strategies, as appropriate, and is designed to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To

address this requirement, the applicant must describe how the project will--

(i) Incorporate current evidence-based practices (including relevant research citations) that improve outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs into (a) the required coursework and clinical experiences for each graduate degree program participating in the project; and (b) the shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the project; and

(ii) Use evidence-based professional development practices for adult learners to instruct scholars.

(4) Is of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) The components of (a) each graduate degree program participating in the project and (b) the shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the proposed project will support scholars' acquisition and enhancement of the identified competencies;

(ii) The components of (a) each graduate degree program participating in the project and (b) the shared

coursework, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the proposed project will be integrated to allow scholars, in collaboration with other team members, to use their knowledge and skills in designing, implementing, and evaluating practices supported by evidence to address the learning and developmental needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(iii) Scholars will be provided with ongoing guidance and feedback during training; and

(iv) The proposed project will provide ongoing induction opportunities and mentoring support to graduates of each graduate degree program participating in the project.

(5) Will collaborate with appropriate partners, including--

(i) High-need schools, which may include high-need LEAs,⁸ high-poverty schools,⁹ schools identified for

⁸ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need LEA" means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

⁹ For the purposes of this priority, "high-poverty school" means a school in which at least 50 percent of students are from low-income families as determined using one of the measures of poverty specified under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. For middle and high schools, eligibility may be calculated on the basis of comparable data from feeder schools.

comprehensive support and improvement,¹⁰ and schools implementing a targeted support and improvement plan¹¹ for children with disabilities; early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographic boundaries of a high-need LEA; and early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State. The purpose of these partnerships is to provide clinical practice for scholars aimed at developing the identified competencies as members of interdisciplinary teams; and

(ii) Other personnel preparation programs on campus or at partnering universities for the purpose of sharing resources, supporting program development and delivery, and addressing personnel shortages.

Eligibility as a high-poverty school under this definition is determined on the basis of the most currently available data.

¹⁰ For the purpose of this priority, the term "school identified for comprehensive support and improvement" means a statewide identified category of school that includes (a) not less than the lowest performing five percent of all schools in the State receiving funds under Title I, Part A of the ESEA; (b) all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students; and (c) public schools in the State described under section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the ESEA.

¹¹ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan" means a school that has developed and is implementing a school-level targeted support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes based on the indicators in the statewide accountability system as defined in section 1111(d)(2) of the ESEA.

(6) Will use technology, as appropriate, to promote scholar learning and professional practice, enhance the efficiency of the project, collaborate with partners, and facilitate ongoing mentoring and support for scholars.

(7) Will ensure that scholars understand how to use technology to support student learning and students' use of educational and assistive technology; and

(8) Will align with and use resources, as appropriate, available through technical assistance centers, which may include centers funded by the Department.

Note: Use the "Find a Center" link at www.osepideasthatwork.org for information about OSEP-funded technical assistance centers.

(c) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of Project Evaluation," how--

(1) The applicant will use comprehensive and appropriate methodologies to evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project have been met, including the project processes and outcomes.

(2) The applicant will collect, analyze, and use data related to specific and measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes of the project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Scholar competencies and other project processes and outcomes will be measured for formative evaluation purposes, including proposed instruments, data collection methods, and possible analyses; and

(ii) It will collect and analyze data on the quality of services provided by scholars who complete the graduate degree programs involved in this interdisciplinary project and are employed in the field for which they were trained, including data on the learning and developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral, meeting college- and career-ready standards), and on growth toward these outcomes, of the children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Note: Following the completion of the project period, grantees are encouraged to engage in ongoing data collection activities.

(3) The methods of evaluation will produce quantitative and qualitative data for objective performance measures that are related to the outcomes of the proposed project.

(4) The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and allow for periodic assessment of progress towards meeting the project outcomes. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Results of the evaluation will be used as a basis for improving the proposed project to prepare special education, early intervention, or related services personnel to provide (a) focused instruction, and (b) intense individualized intervention(s) in an interdisciplinary team-based approach to improve outcomes of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; and

(ii) The grantee will report the evaluation results to OSEP in its annual and final performance reports.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative under "Project Assurances" or in the applicable appendices, that the following program requirements are met. The applicant must--

(1) Provide scholar support for participants from two or more graduate degree programs partnering in the proposed interdisciplinary personnel preparation project.

Consistent with 34 CFR 304.3, each scholar should (a) receive support for no less than one academic year, and (b) be eligible to fulfill service obligation requirements following degree program completion. Funding across degree programs may be applied differently.

(2) Include in Appendix B of the application --

(i) Course syllabi for all coursework in the major of each degree program and all shared courses, group assignments, and coordinated clinical experiences required of interdisciplinary project scholars; and

(ii) For new coursework, proposed syllabi; and

(iii) Table(s) summarizing the program of study for each degree program, and clearly delineating the shared coursework, group assignments, and coordinated field experiences required of project scholars.

(3) Ensure that a comprehensive set of completed syllabi, including syllabi created or revised as part of a project planning year, are submitted to OSEP by the end of Year 1 of the grant.

(4) Ensure scholars will not be selected based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Per the Supreme Court's decision in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*, 515 U.S. 200 (1995), the Department does not allow the selection of individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, or national origin. For this reason, grantees must ensure that any discussion of the recruitment of scholars based on race, ethnicity, or national origin distinguishes between increasing the pool of applicants and actually selecting scholars.

(5) Ensure that the project will meet all requirements for grantees in disbursing scholarships as outlined in 34 CFR 304.23. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements would be a violation of the grant award that could result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department. Specifically, before disbursement of scholarship assistance to an individual, a grantee must--

(i) Ensure that the scholar--

(A) Is a citizen or national of the United States;

(B) Is a permanent resident of--

(1) Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; or

(2) The Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau during the period in which these entities are eligible to receive an award under the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program; or

(C) Provides evidence from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that the individual is--

(1) A lawful permanent resident of the United States; or

(2) In the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or permanent resident;

(ii) Limit the cost of attendance portion of the scholarship assistance (as discussed in 34 CFR 304.21(a)) to the amount by which the individual's cost of attendance at the institution exceeds the amount of grant assistance the scholar is to receive for the same academic year under title IV of the HEA; and

(iii) Obtain a Certification of Eligibility for Federal Assistance from each scholar, as prescribed in 34 CFR 75.60, 75.61, and 75.62.

(6) Ensure that the project will meet all requirements in 34 CFR 304.23, particularly those related to informing all scholarship recipients of their service obligation commitment. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements would be a violation of the grant award that could result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department. Specifically, the grantee must prepare, and ensure that each scholarship recipient signs, the following two documents:

(i) A Pre-Scholarship Agreement prior to the scholar receiving a scholarship for an eligible program (Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number 1820-0686); and

(ii) An Exit Certification immediately upon the scholar leaving, completing, or otherwise exiting that program (OMB Control Number 1820-0686).

(7) Ensure that prior approval from the OSEP project officer will be obtained before admitting additional scholars beyond the number of scholars proposed in the application and before transferring a scholar to another OSEP-funded grant.

(8) Ensure that the project will meet the statutory requirements in section 662(e) through (h) of IDEA.

(9) Ensure that at least 65 percent of the total requested budget over the five years will be used for scholar support. Applicants proposing to use Year 1 for program development may budget for less than 65 percent of the total requested budget over the five years for scholar support; instead 65 percent of the total award minus funds allocated for program development will be used to calculate the value of required scholar support.

(10) Ensure that the IHE will not require scholars enrolled in the program to work (e.g., as graduate assistants) as a condition of receiving support (e.g.,

tuition, stipends) from the proposed project, unless the work is specifically related to the acquisition of scholars' competencies and the requirements for completion of their personnel preparation program. This prohibition on work as a condition of receiving support does not apply to the service obligation requirements in section 662(h) of IDEA.

(11) Ensure that the budget includes attendance of the project director at a three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project.

(12) Ensure that the project director, key personnel, and scholars will actively participate in the cross-project collaboration, advanced trainings, and cross-site learning opportunities (e.g., webinars, briefings) organized by OSEP. This partnership will be used to build capacity of participants, increase the impact of funding, and promote innovative and interdisciplinary service delivery models across projects.

(13) Ensure that if the project maintains a website, relevant information and documents are in a format that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

(14) Ensure that annual data will be submitted on each scholar who receives grant support (OMB Control Number

1820-0686). The primary purposes of the data collection are to track the service obligation fulfillment of scholars who receive funds from OSEP grants and to collect data for program performance measure reporting under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). Applicants are encouraged to visit the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System (DCS) website at <https://pdp.ed.gov/osep> for further information about this data collection requirement. Typically, data collection begins in January of each year, and grantees are notified by email about the data collection period for their grant, although grantees may submit data as needed, year round. This data collection must be submitted electronically by the grantee and does not supplant the annual grant performance report required of each grantee for continuation funding (see 34 CFR 75.590). Data collection includes the submission of a signed, completed Pre-Scholarship Agreement and Exit Certification for each scholar funded under an OSEP grant (see paragraph (6) of this section, subparagraphs (i) and (ii)).

References:

Boe, E. E., deBettencourt, L., Dewey, J. F., Rosenberg, M. S., Sindelar, P. T., & Leko, C. D. (2013).
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Indicators, explanations, and impacts.

Exceptionality, 21, 103-125.

Browder, D. M., Wood, L., Thompson, J., & Ribuffo, C.

(2014). Evidence-based practices for students with severe disabilities (Document No. IC-3). Retrieved from University of Florida, Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform Center website:

<http://cedar.education.ufl.edu/tool/innovation-configurations/>.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C.

1400, et seq. (2004).

McLeskey, J., & Brownell, M. (2015). High-leverage practices and teacher preparation in special education (Document No. PR-1). Retrieved from University of Florida, Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform Center website: <http://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/High-Leverage-Practices-and-Teacher-Preparation-in-Special-Education.pdf>.

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion.

(August, 2011). Competencies for early childhood educators in the context of inclusion: Issues and

guidance for States. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

Smith, J. (2010). An interdisciplinary approach to preparing early intervention professionals: A university and community collaborative initiative. Teacher Education and Special Education, 33(2), 131-142.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2

CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 304.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$83,541,000 for the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program for FY 2018, of which we intend to use an estimated \$10,000,000 for this competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2019 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: See chart.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: See chart.

Maximum Award: See chart.

Estimated Number of Awards: See chart.

Project Period: See chart.

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE SERVICES AND RESULTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (84.325K)
APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

CFDA Number and Name	Applications Available	Deadline for Transmittal of Applications	Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	Estimated Range of Awards	Estimated Average Size of Awards	Maximum Award for each budget period of 12 months	Estimated Number of Awards	Project Period	Contact Person
<p>84.325K Interdisciplinary Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs</p> <p>Focus Area A: Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.</p> <p>Focus Area B: Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.</p>	[INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]	[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]	[INSERT DATE 105 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]	<p>\$200,000-\$250,000</p> <p>\$200,000-\$250,000</p>	<p>\$250,000</p> <p>\$250,000</p>	<p>\$250,000*</p> <p>\$250,000*</p>	<p>10</p> <p>30</p>	<p>Up to 60 mos.</p> <p>Up to 60 mos.</p>	<p>Focus Area A or Minority Serving Institutions: Dawn Ellis 202-245-6417 dawn.ellis@ed.gov Potomac Center Plaza, Room 5137</p> <p>Focus Area B: Maryann McDermott 202-245-7439 maryann.mcdermott@ed.gov Potomac Center Plaza, Room 5144</p> <p>or</p> <p>Sarah Allen 202-245-7875 sarah.allen@ed.gov v Potomac Center Plaza, Room 5144</p>

* We will not make an award exceeding \$250,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs and private nonprofit organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Subgrantees: Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee under this competition may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: IHEs and private nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

4. Other General Requirements: (a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with

disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: For information on how to submit an application please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

3. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit

the application narrative to no more than 50 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance of the Project (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated; and

(ii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(b) Quality of Project Services (45 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(ii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services;

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services; and

(iv) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.

(c) Quality of Project Evaluation (25 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measureable;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(d) Quality of Project Personnel, Management Plan, and Resources (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel, management plan, and the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been

underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(ii) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

(iv) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization; and

(v) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may

consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will

make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about

your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded

competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection

analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. Performance Measures: Under GPRA, the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on the quality of the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. These measures include: (1) the percentage of preparation programs that incorporate scientifically or evidence-based practices into their curricula; (2) the percentage of scholars completing preparation programs who are knowledgeable and skilled in evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for children with disabilities; (3) the percentage of scholars who exit preparation programs prior to completion due to poor academic performance; (4) the percentage of scholars completing preparation programs who are working in the area(s) in which they were prepared upon program completion; and (5) the Federal cost per scholar who completed the preparation program.

In addition, the Department will gather information on the following outcome measures: (1) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in high-need districts; (2) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are

employed in the field of special education for at least two years; and (3) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and who are rated effective by their employers.

Grantees may be asked to participate in assessing and providing information on these aspects of program quality.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the Management Support Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5113, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2500. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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Dated: June 8, 2018

Johnny W. Collett,
*Assistant Secretary for Special
Education and Rehabilitative
Services.*

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